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AUTHOR Tribble, Ike, Jr.
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ABSTRACT

Motivational counseling facilitates the activation of specific drives and incentives which will trigger action or decisions on the part of black students. These causative factors enable the students to establish and develop realistic goals and objectives and a precise plan for reaching their stated aspirations. Schools generally frustrate the ambitions, desires, and motivation of black students. They thwart their intellectual growth and fail to provide an environment that is conducive to good mental health. The role of the counselor and the way in which the counseling process is perceived and implemented in the school setting must be reshaped to address the following needs of black students: (1) Black students must be helped to work through their frustrations within the school setting as part of the curriculum; (2) blocks that impede intellectual growth must be removed; and (3) a positive climate for learning must be created. This comprehensive counseling model is a dynamic motivational process designed to reduce and/or resolve that conflict which exists between black students and the school. An important element in the model is the core group which is basically a small group of students (grades 9-12) who meet on a regular basis with a carefully selected, skilled leader. Through group interaction and the use of problem solving and conflict resolution, some of the problems of black students may be resolved. (Author/AM)

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No. 5 in a series

MOTIVATIONAL COUNSELING AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL FOR BLACK STUDENTS

A Position Paper prepared for the
Education Policy and Information Center
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Ike Tribble, Jr.
Assistant Vice President
Mills College
Oakland, California

May, 1973

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FOREWORD

The National Urban League's Education Policy Information Center (EPIC) presents the fifth in a series of Monographs designed to provide a major new forum for black educators and an authoritative black perspective on educational issues. In this Monograph, "Motivational Counseling as an Educational Tool for Black Students," Ike Tribble, Jr. Assistant Vice President of Mills College in Oakland, California, discusses the critical role that sound counseling plays in the positive motivation of black students in an educational setting.

The National Urban League's Education Policy Information Center (EPIC) was established in January, 1972, to keep the black community abreast of trends and issues in education policy making and in complex national programs affecting public education in urban communities.

The opinions expressed in the Monographs are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies or the position of the National Urban League.

Ermon O. Hogan, Ph.D.
Director
Education Division
National Urban League, Inc.

MOTIVATIONAL COUNSELING AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL FOR BLACK STUDENTS

Introduction

The black community is acutely aware that the avenue of educational attainment has been the most dependable route for young blacks to escape the social, economic, and political oppression indigenous to black communities across the nation. Presently, the situation with respect to black children and education is critical, and the needs are apparent, but practical alternatives are too slow in being developed.

This paper will approach the topic of motivational counseling from a philosophical and conceptual view rather than a discrete function apart from the larger educational process. It is proposed that a new perspective will result from reshaping the role of the "counselor" and the way in which the counseling process is perceived and implemented in the school setting. One of the great difficulties encountered is the insufficiency of literature dealing directly with the concept of motivational counseling for black, inner-city youth. For this reason, we are forced to use information developed on counseling in general along with the accumulated knowledge of the black experience in order to determine educational perspectives and alternatives for black youth.

Background of the Problem

From 1619 to the present, a visible and persistent conflict has existed in America between the majority population and the black minority. For the past ten years this conflict has heightened and at times seems almost uncontrollable. Education has been and remains a focal point for this persistent conflict.

The migratory patterns of the past two decades show a steady exodus of the more affluent citizens from the inner city. They are headed directly for the more inviting suburban communities that offer the racial isolation and security that the city no longer affords. As a consequence of this crucial population shift, the major urban centers in America are well on their way to becoming black urban centers by default.

Urban school systems are still reverberating from this phenomenon and currently find that the majority of their student population is from ethnic minorities. They have also discovered that this migratory shift has eroded the already shaky tax base for some cities and the support base for others, bringing the schools to the brink of financial collapse.

Because our educational system evolved from a Western European genesis, it is understandable that it is often charged with elitism. Education in early Europe was designed to educate the clergy and the nobility. Therefore, it is not inconsistent

for the present black protagonists to charge that the system is still elitist in nature and cite the striking correlation between those who are affluent and succeed in the system. It follows that where you find more affluent students, you generally can expect to find a school system with a greater ability to pay for its program. Concomitantly, where you find a large concentration of minority and low-income students, there is most likely a lesser ability to pay. Ironically, where there is a lessened ability to pay for educational services, the cost of the services provided is exceedingly higher than the situation where the ability to pay is greater.

Miller and Roby discuss the results of a study in school expenditures conducted at Syracuse University in The Future of Inequality where they found that contiguous suburbs spent considerably more ($145 per pupil) than the metropolitan areas adjacent to them.[1] According to Miller and Roby, one of the most disturbing findings in the study was:

> That state educational funds give relatively more to the suburbs than to the cities; schools in the suburbs receive $40 more in state aid per pupil than schools in the cities.[2]

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[1]S.M. Miller and Pamela Roby, The Future of Inequality (New York/London: Basic Books, Inc., 1970), p. 123.

[2]Ibid.

The above discussion should not be construed to indicate support for the argument advanced by Paul Mort of a cost-quality relationship in education, which suggests that the more money you pour into the system, the higher the quality of return. Mort's students later agreed that there does exist a point of diminishing return.[3] This requires a closer look at what is being accomplished with present resources before we approach the overburdened taxpayer for more money.

The problems related to defining as well as achieving quality education are now becoming crucial for the suburbs just as they have been for the inner city. Money is not a panacea for the ills of urban education. An evolving system that meets present and future needs of individuals and the growing technocracy should be priority goals.

Statement of the Problem

Black students are leaving secondary schools in the inner city at alarming rates. Miller and Roby state:

> Today nearly one-fourth of white youth and nearly one-half of black youth are dropping or being pushed out of school before they complete high school. In ghetto communities the proportion is higher.[4]

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[3]Robert G. Owens, Organizational Behavior in Schools, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970), p. 143.

[4]U.S. Department of Commerce/Bureau of the Census, The Social and Economic Status of Negroes in the United States, 1970. BLS Report No. 394, Current Population Reports, Series No. 38, p. 23, Special Studies, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), p. 77.

Black students in the metropolitan North and West are more than three times as likely as white students to drop out of school by ages 16 and 17. Approximately 48 percent of the non-white (predominantly black) population over 25 lack a high school diploma as contrasted with 27.5 percent of whites. Nationally, in 1970 the dropout rate for 14 to 19 year old black males was 15.9 percent, for white males 6.7 percent; the dropout rate for 14 to 19 year old black females was 13.3 percent, for white females 8.1 percent; and black high school students 14 to 17 years old were less likely to be enrolled at grade level than their white counterparts.[5]

Among the causes for this disparity are school expectations and practices which reflect the dominant culture to the apparent detriment of most, if not all, black students. Because the school and the black student are often working at cross purposes, much failure and general discontent have resulted. Both the school and the black student have developed mutual expectations of failure which tend to be self-fulfilling and self-perpetuating. Annie Stein makes this point by documenting that the average child in black Puerto Rican schools in New York City is functionally illiterate after eight years of schooling in the world's richest city.[6] The resulting conflicts range from general

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[5]Ibid., p. 80.

[6]Annie Stein, "Strategies for Failure," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 41, Nr. 2, (May 1972), p. 158.

frustration to a lessened demonstrated ability to succeed, to the extreme of dropping out of school. Many of those who do graduate from high school enter a cycle of frustration because the education received did not properly prepare them with the requisite skills for competing in the open market. Social promotion rather than competency based promotion was and still is the rule rather than the exception.

Definition of Terms

In order to clarify the ensuing discussion, it is necessary to define key terms.

Racism. For purposes of this paper, racism is an irrational belief in the superiority of members of one racial group over another, resulting in the latter's systematic exclusion and prevention from reaping the benefits of the society. Both the racists and the victims of racism are affected by the process.

Institutionalized racism. This term represents racism in its most fully achieved form of development. Institutionalized racism occurs when all of a society's basic institutions are fully permeated with notions of racial superiority and cultural arrogance. These institutions then carry out the racist mission with subtle effectiveness.

> "Racism, the oppression, exclusion, and discrimination of Negro people on the part of white people and white institutions, infests our whole society and operates as a barrier against the freedom, opportunity, and manhood of all Negro people, whatever their level of achievement or socio-economic status."[7]

Generally, the institutionalized form of racism is much more difficult for the victims to deal with because of its covert and pervasive nature.

Education as an institution plays a very important role in perpetuating the notions of superiority of the dominant group. The institution was developed without regard for the values, expectations or needs of black Americans or other ethnic minority groups. Its charge is to perpetuate the social order, not to develop individuals who feel obligated to question the fundamental assumptions upon which it's based.[8]

Jules Henry defines education as socialization and states: "all educational systems aim at a steady state -- a condition in which, on the one hand, the system tirelessly corrects deviations from the prescriptions of the culture, while on the other hand, the corrections become part of the psycho - neurological equipment

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[7]Andrew Billingsley, Black Families in White America, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 155.

[8]Ike Tribble, "Motivational Counseling: A Black Educational Imperative," Journal of the Association for Supervision on Curriculum Development, Vol. 28, No. 3, (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, December, 1970), p. 298 (hereafter cited as "Motivational Counseling").

of the child and ultimately of the adult."[9]

Core Group. The core group is basically a small group of students (9-12) with a carefully selected and skilled leader. The leader uses this small group setting as a motivational process that is designed to bridge the expectations and aspirations of black students and those of the schools. The goal of the core group is to reduce the conflict that exists between the students and the schools.

Conflict. This term represents the antagonism or opposition between interests and principles which arises from differences between expectations and goals of the student and those of the educational institutions, and between the student's aspirations and his ability to translate them into action. These types of conflicts are related to the frustrations which students so often feel and which lead to a lessened ability to succeed academically.[10]

Motivational counseling. This process facilitates the activation of specific drives and incentives which will trigger action or decisions on the part of black students. These causative-factors enable the students to establish and develop realistic goals and objectives and a precise plan for reaching

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[9]U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, Hearings on Equal Educational Opportunity, 92nd Congress, 1st session, part 13, 27, 29 July, 5 August 1971, p. 6162.

[10]Ike Tribble, Study Report: Special Summer Session, (Oakland, California: Mills College, 1971), p. 14.

their stated aspirations. The impediments to successful goal attainment should also be clearly identifiable as a result of the process.

Historical Perspective

History plays a very important role in the way the question of education and racism is viewed. The rationalizations which allowed the peculiar institution to flourish are the same kinds of rationalizations that have become implicit assumptions in the workings of the educational process.

The racist myth that was clearly articulated during the early nineteenth century has stayed with us until the present day. This myth, sometimes referred to as the pro-slavery argument, was based on a theory of the racial inferiority and biological inequality of the Negro.[11] One of the consistencies that we find in historical study is that social practice generally precedes legal enactment.[12] The point being that the notions underlying the innate inferiority of black people were deeply embedded in the minds of white Americans long before "Plessy vs. Ferguson" in 1896. Long after scientific study and legal maneuvers had proven the unworthiness of the claims, the notions of inferiority continued to be perpetuated because they were institutionalized by a white society that still found them useful.

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[11] J.H. Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, (New York: Vintage Books, Inc., 1967), p. 262.

[12] W. Jordan, White over Black, (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, Inc., 1969), p. 262.

Education is seen by many as the most important institution in our society because it is charged with the preservation and transmission of the culture. A significant part of the American heritage is the belief in black inferiority. It took until the nineteen sixties to prove to black Americans that this was not merely a Southern phenomenon--it had strong Northern support as well.

At a meeting on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, in July of 1968, Kenneth Clark said:

> Another part of this issue is that educational institutions and educators have not really assumed an initiative in helping to free Americans of the tenacious, pervasive, and particularly the subtle components of the social disease of racism--and it is an education problem: education in the specific sense and education in the broader sense. It is a function of education to help to free human beings from the constrictions of superstitions, irrational fears, and hatreds, and it is a prime function of education, we believe, to attempt to liberate the human mind and the human spirit.[13]

Institutionalized racism in education manifests itself in many ways such as school spending, staffing patterns, facilities, curriculum and most importantly, pupil achievement. Kenneth Clark makes the point when he states that the question of the academic inferiority of Negro students in ghetto schools is no longer in dispute.[14] This can be extended to schools in general, not just ghetto schools.

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[13] Racism and American Education, (1st Harper Colophon, 1970), p. 9.

[14] Kenneth B. Clark, Dark Ghetto, (New York, Harper & Row, 1965), p. 125.

The Kerner and Coleman Reports both indicate the depth of the problem. In summation, they both suggest that black children are being de-educated -- meaning that the longer they are in school the greater the gap in achievement between themselves and their white counterparts. At the end of grade six they are 1.6 years behind and at the end of grade twelve they are 3.3 years behind.[15]

The efficacy of this argument could be expanded further; however, it is not the main focus of this paper. It suffices to say that little is expected of black students; they are rewarded for mediocre performance, and consequently accomplish increasingly less than pupils at their grade level should accomplish.[16]

Black Perspective

In developing a black student profile the literature indicates a disproportionately high incidence of low self-esteem, lack of motivation, poor performance and low achievement.[17] This would not suggest the basis for good mental health. A

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[15]James S. Coleman, Equality of Educational Opportunity, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1966), p. 111.

[16]Kenneth B. Clark, Dark Ghetto, pp. 123-124.

[17]Ike Tribble, "Motivational Counseling", p. 298.

study conducted by a team of black psychologists and psychiatrists in New York City concluded that black children were more mentally healthy than their Puerto Rican and white counterparts only at age six. The chief investigator, Dr. Thomas S. Langner, expressed in the concluding report that the stress of being black in American society was the primary cause of a significant increase of mental illness in black teen-agers. He also suggested that this extreme stress is present regardless of wealth, education or skills.[18] Cobbs and Grier see a black norm which consists of cultural paranoia, depression, masochism and antisocialism in Black Rage. They suggest that these and related traits are simply adaptive devices developed in response to a peculiar environment.[19] Blacks are faced with a greater threat to their esteem and self and therefore, it is necessary to develop multiple defenses.[20]

Many black educators have observed "Gaming", a defense mechanism used within the black life style which offers the user alternatives to pain and a false sense of security from the unknown. Black people have a cultural history of running games on the oppressor. From the plantation days down to the present, as

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[18] Ibid., pp. 298-299.

[19] W. H. Grier & P. M. Cobbs, Black Rage, (New York: Bantam, 1969), pp. 177-178.

[20] James Comer, Self Esteem and the Black American Future, Renaissance 2 (Yale: Afro-American Cultural Center, 1971), p. 2.

survival mechanisms, we have developed distinct patterns of behavior and language usage. I would assert that "gaming" has been going on for so many generations that black youths are now having extreme difficulty distinguishing between the games and reality. It has become such an integral part of so many young black personalities that often they find themselves "gaming" on people who are committed to aiding them in realizing their innermost goals or in situations that are relatively safe. Peer group pressure often forces black youth to adhere more closely to the gaming syndrome even when clear distinction can be articulated. This is not to be underestimated!

"Brinkmanship", a frequently used testing method by black youths to find out just how far they can push an authority figure before he or she will react in a manner which will predict a behavior pattern that can be gamed upon. This method is used with sophistication by both males and females; however, it represents the end of the line for most females. Females are not usually predisposed to physical confrontation with authority figures. Their most vicious and persistent assaults are usually verbal ones. Peer acceptance can oftentimes be the chief motivational factor behind the constant use of this testing method. It is my experience that black youths who resort to this method consistently are, in a perverted sense, asking for attention, discipline, and consistency from those representatives of the institution or the larger society.

"Show Me", a more easily identifiable testing method because it has very obvious physical and masculine overtones. This method could be compared to "walking the burning sands." Before black youths will accept your presence, you have to prove yourself by some overt display of accomplishment. The reality of the street, and the cultural paranoia that ensues, literally requires black youths to be very distrustful of people regardless of color. The standards and tools used for evaluation of the authority (counselor) figure are again shaped by those obvious oppressive forces we identified earlier. If one understands the life style, then he must decide how he can best go about gaining acceptance from the youth. With young black males, it many times takes physical confrontation. Male authority figures have an advantage over females in the same position. If the male figure knows how to box, wrestle, play the contact sports, shoot pool, etc., he can oftentimes avoid the outright confrontation by showing his ability to overcome his challengers and meet their need to be shown.

The interplay between the sexes is very important here. Girls will go all out against male authority figures because they realize that the socialization process says that boys are not supposed to hit girls and they expect that unequivocally from male adults, young and old. On the other hand, boys will go much further with a female figure, as a rule, because the same socialization process spells out that males clearly have a physical advantage over females. Thus, the only behavioral responses that they can predict

from a female figure is tears, tongue lashing, or throwing them out of class or school. Because of the seriousness of male emasculation at an early age in the black community, this concept of "show me" will have to be dealt with for some time.[21]

Poor mental health results when a contradiction arises between the inner self and the group demands of the external environment. The inner self is developed in consonance with early parental response and that segment of society is encountered while the child is quite young. The school represents a significant portion of the early segment of society encountered by the child.[22] Parental expectations are shaped by the same social forces that will shape the child's expectations. These social forces project negative images of blacks in America. Children are responsive to the expectations of their environment (parents, school, society) and they absorb both the conscious and unconscious message.[23]

If the literature accurately reflects the situation, it seems reasonable to conclude that poor mental health is widespread among black children in the school setting. Positive mental health must be developed as part of the social, cognitive, and individual transactions between the student and his environment.

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[21] Tribble, "Motivational Counseling."

[22] W.J. Grier and P.M. Cobbs, Black Rage, pp. 177-178.

[23] Ibid., p. 131.

Continuous thwarting can disrupt learning and damage the personality.[24] The literature demonstrates that the thwarting is a constant rather than a variable for most black students. To speak of positive motivation in the face of such overwhelming odds suggests optimistic notions about the educational system. Alvin Poussaint, Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard University, addresses the needs of black students in his article on Black Youth and Motivation:

> Three such needs concern us here: the need for achievement, the need for self-assertion or aggression and the need for self approval.[25]

The school setting tradionally has not met the needs mentioned above and therefore motivation in black youth has been stifled and oftentimes obliterated.

Analysis

The cult that has developed around the "disadvantaged" has not produced significant reduction in the massive failure of black students in the inner city. The cultural deprivation approach has displaced the inherent racial inferiority theories of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The question is, does this approach also continue to perpetuate the racist practices

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[24]L.J. Cronbach, Educational Psychology, (New York/Chicago: Harcourt, Brace & Co.,1954), pp. 473-474.

[25]Alvin Poussaint and Carolyn Atkinson, Black Youth and Motivation, p. 46.

which prevent the present system from equitably serving black children?[26] How many different ways do we need to say that black children are not learning? The time has come educationally, when the system must make a clear delineation between the concept of innate inferiority and the inability of the system to educate black and other minority children.[27]

The life style of the black community contains essentially two identifiable elements: the Africanisms which survive as an aftermath of three-hundred years of oppression in America and provide a significant cultural base now being rediscovered; and a cybernetic reaction and adaption to an overtly violent and racist society. Racism forces the community into an almost irreversible reactionary mode which is characterized by protective (defense) mechanisms, designed to ward off as much pain as possible.

These basic human needs of black youth are generally met through an adaptation process which filters the larger society's values and goals through a black life style. The end result is that black youth have very high aspirational levels; however the behavior patterns developed are not consistent with the internalized white aspirations. Therefore, the successful

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[26]Kenneth B. Clark, Dark Ghetto, (New York, Harper & Row: 1965), p. 130.

[27]Ike Tribble, The time Has Come, Paper read at the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, Equal Opportunity and Labor Relations Conference,

realization of goals is oftentimes unrealistic or non-existent.[28] Due to the absence of positive reinforcement in the child's encounter with the larger society, black children seem to lack a definite sense of personal and academic discipline.

The black family, and consequently the black community, has been blamed erroneously for much of the failure of black students in the schools. The research around this question of poor performance is very conflicting. Dr. Robert Hill, Director of the Research Department of the National Urban League, (1971) substantively argues against the acceptance of much of the past work of social scientists with respect to the black family because of its inaccuracy and preoccupation with the pathology and weaknesses of the family. By using the same data, he suggests that the strengths of the black family far outweigh its weaknesses. His study identifies and analyzes five strenghts of the family; adaptability of family roles, strong kinship bonds, strong work orientation, strong religious orientation and strong achievement orientation. These strengths clearly remove much of the onus and demonstrably illustrate that the vast majority of black families have been responsible. If the families need

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[28] I. Tribble, "Motivational Counseling," p. 298.

strengthening in some areas, this should begin by building on these established strengths.[29] The black community understands that its children are not innately inferior from birth and that they have the same capacity for success in the education "game" that majority group children have. Black children do not arrive on the educational scene with irreparable self-images, nor branded as failures by their home and neighborhood environments. Many black children are lost in the educational process somewhere between kindergarten and the third grade. The educational experience apparently brands black children early with the indelible tag of failure and, subsequently, they get a disproportionate share of the failure tags. William Glasser addressed the subject of failure with profundity when he stated:

> ... regardless of how many failures a person has had in his past, regardless of his background, his culture, his color, or his economic level, he will not succeed in general until he can in some way first experience success in one important part of his life. Given the first success to build upon, the negative factors, the ones emphasized by the sociologists, mean little.[30]

One reality of the black condition in America is that the educational system is established and carries with it institutional momentum that will insure its presence in form and function for

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[29]Robert Hill, The Strengths of Black Families, (New York: Emerson Hall Publishers, 1971).

[30]William Glasser, MD., Schools Without Failure, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers), ;. 5.

some time to come. The majority of black and white people in America still believe that education represents the key to upward mobility, financial security and social prestige. To a great extent this is true; however, it does not mean that the educational system can not be made to serve black students' needs more effectively.

The enumeration of several assumptions is necessary at this juncture to maintain continuity in the discussion:

1) The educational system was not designed to serve blacks, therefore substantive modifications are necessary before relevant quality education can commence.
2) The educational system is not invincible as demonstrated by the countless number of blacks who have successfully negotiated its hurdles.
3) The vast majority of blacks in leadership positions today were educated in all black educational environments during the critical developmental years. This confirms the potentiality of blacks to qualitatively educate their own.

In spite of insurmountable odds, black people have come a long way since the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Education has played a very significant role in the perilous one-hundred and nine year journey. If black people are to continue the journey to "freedom", education will continue to be one of the most important conduits through which success will flow.

An Alternative

It was stated earlier that the educational situation for black students is critical. An analysis has been presented which hopefully sets the socio-institutional parameters of the situation. If we accept the notion that the schools generally:

1) frustrate the ambitions, desires and motivation of black students;
2) thwart their intellectual growth; and
3) fail to provide an environment that is conducive to good mental health;

then we begin to see the necessity for a process model. Such a model should have the potential of addressing itself to the following tasks:

1) helping black students work through their frustrations within the school setting as part of the curriculum
2) removing the blocks to normal intellectual growth by developing a WIN strategy; and
3) creating a more positive climate for learning through accomplishing the above.

The way in which the counseling function is perceived by the black community is a direct reflection on what we know factually about the counseling process, and how well that which is known is understood.

The essential emphasis of counseling as seen by the American Psychological Association are personal growth and development, achievement of harmony with the environment, and the influencing of society to recognize individual differences and to encourage the development of individuals.[31] These emphases should vary with the clientele and the various social settings in which the counselor finds himself.

Some of the identifiable facets of the counseling process are the relationship that develops between counselor and client, the confidentiality of the relationship, the confidence the client must have in the counselor, the limited nature of services in the school setting (i.e. time, place and the discouragement of the counselor as an advocate), information gathering on the client, (testing, records, etc.) and the client-centered approach to the process.

It is difficult to argue against the emphases of counseling and some of the essentials of the process. However, the problem for black students is the way in which it is implemented and who implements it.

It has been sufficiently substantiated in this paper, as well as others, that the American educational system has been and is presently a racist institution. Further, the functions

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[31]Leona E. Tyler, The Work of the Counselor, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crafts, Inc., 1961), p. 21.

that fall under the aegis of the institution are totally permeated with racist notions and practices. The plethora of accounts about black students being counseled into the virtual oblivion of wood and metal shops, the overwhelming evidence of black and other minority students being placed into mentally retarded classes, cultural biases of psychological testing and its residual effects, the horrors of tracking and the overwhelming incidence of unsuccessful academic performance, all support the charge of racist practices within the counseling function. Black students have been and continue to be counseled primarily by white counselors which raises some other questions about the process. However, even in integrated and all black environs, the process is the same, and the results differ slightly, if at all. Although there is good reason to question all white counseling staffs, it is equally as important to understand that a quick blackening of all those white faces will not solve the counseling dilemma.

The responses frequently heard from counselors and other educators suggest that they are understaffed, over-loaded with extraneous paperwork and unrealistic pupil loads, allotted insufficient time, provided with undesirable environments, and receive a relatively low priority in the natural order of educational business. There is a great deal of fact in what they say. However, if all of the above ills were corrected by the wave of some magic wand, it is suggested that the "counseling problem" would

remain. It would remain because the way the function is defined, perceived, and structured makes it an almost impossible task.

The counseling function must be removed from its present compartmentalized box and accorded a position of importance which suggests that the function is everybody's business, from the principal to the janitor. Without this kind of view, all counseling programs are doomed to continued failure. Counseling must be seen as a learning as well as a supportive service function. Along with its comprehensive thrust, it should have a motivational core which indicates to all that every student counts, that time cannot be wasted and that community needs are translated into career and academic programs. Teaching subject matter might be futile if the school is not simultaneously focusing on how the student feels about himself and his attitude toward learning! The counseling function must have equal stature with the academic function. The two are inextricably bound!

Black students have serious educational needs that are both cognitive and affective. The educational process must develop a curriculum which takes a balanced programmatic approach toward satisfying both the cognitive and affective needs. The motivational counseling process attempts to reach this end.

Motivational counseling as defined herein is not by any means an easy task, and there are no guarantees or panaceas for success. The situation is clear to many inside and outside of the educational setting. Black students by and large are not

working up to intellectual capacity. They are frequently influenced by negative role models and must seek the approval of their peers and adult acquaintances through detrimental and counterproductive behavior. Because of the lack of positive reinforcement from the school environment, these negative behavior patterns are solidified and carried over into the community and become, in many instances, permanent behavioral characteristics of the adult black community. Thus, the oppressive cycle is reinforced.

The Comprehensive Counseling Model is a dynamic motivational process designed to reduce and/or resolve that conflict which exists between black (minority/low income) students and the school. It also serves as a bridge between the educational goals and aspirations of the students and the educational institutions with which they are involved.

An important element in the model is the Core Group which is basically a small group of students (9-12) who meet on a regular basis with a carefully selected, skilled leader. Through group interaction and utilization of the processes of problem-solving and conflict resolution, it is hypothesized that some of the attendant problems that accompany being black in the school setting can be identified and resolved.

Heretofore, the lack of successful goal attainment by many black students has been attributed to low self-concept and/or low aspirational levels. The Coleman Report (1966) indicates that no significant difference exists between the expressed self-concepts

of black and white children and that blacks generally have higher aspirational levels than whites of the same socio-economic background.[32] Coleman's findings have been disputed on the basis of other research and his limited sample.

Irwin Katz (1968) found that blacks tended to have exaggerated aspirational levels.[33] Deutch's work concludes that black children have significantly more negative self-images than white children.[34] Findings of white researchers are developed from an experimental base which is not inclusive of the black experience. When Katz, et al, suggested exaggerated aspiration levels, it is most conceivable that Ladner, Billingsley or Hill might see those aspirations as being not only appropriate but realizable. Andrew Billingsley[35] points out that most of these analyses are comparative in nature which assumes blacks and whites being on equal footing at some point in our history. The experience of compensatory

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[32]Coleman, Equality of Educational Opportunity, p. 111.

[33]Irwin Katz, "Academic Motivation and Equal Educational Opportunity," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 38, Winter 1968, pp. 56-65.

[34]Martin Deutch, "Minority Groups and Class Status as Related to Social and Personality Factors in Scholastic Achievement," in Martin Deutch and Associates, The Disadvantaged Child (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1967), p. 106.

[35]Robert Hill, Strengths of Black Families, Foreword.

programs indicates high aspirational levels in their participants. The Comprehensive Counseling Model assumes that a major facet of the problem is the gap that exists between those aspirations and the school reality.

Schools are domesticated organizations: they are well protected and consequently secure. Students are forced by law to participate, thereby perpetuating the organization without regard to its performance. Conflict is inevitable in any organization. The needs of the individual invariably conflict with the needs of the organization. However, when the race variable is added, it significantly compounds that conflict.

The model provides a process through which these conflicts can be reduced or resolved by creating a small group environment conducive to free articulation of feelings and aspirations. The model assumes that when a student becomes aware of, understands and articulates the problems he perceives himself having with the school environment, he is well on his way to dealing with those problems.

The model also requires a specific time and place to be set aside for the small group process on a daily basis. The restructuring of the school day is essential. An immediate feedback system is developed, thereby providing staff and students with a constant flow of information through which they can evaluate their behavior and actions. This kind of system is seen as threatening by many in authority; however, it is essential

to the resolution of the existing conflict. The feedback system can also assist in institutional analysis when required.

Teachers with student assistants are seen as the leaders in the Core Group. Many of the routine functions of the present counseling staff would be accomplished in the Core Group, including required home visits. This would free valuable time for the counselors to deal with more acute behavioral or psychological problems. It would provide more time for them to stay informed about the latest trends in higher education, career development and occupational training. It is conceivable that to implement such a model, a system would have to reduce some of its present offerings and concentrate more heavily on the three R's and the three I's: reading, writing and arithmetic along with informal, independent and integrated (interdisciplinary) learning.

Time must be scheduled for Core Groups to meet twice daily; before classes begin and after they end. The morning session is designed to develop the students' awareness and understanding of themselves, to identify problems and conflicts, and to encourage the articulation of goals and aspirations. This can be accomplished through general discussion, games, role-playing and through video-tape recording presentations by students. A thematic approach can be used throughout all the Core Groups for program discussion continuity.

The closing session serves as a continuation of the morning session. Emphasis should be placed on making an "attitude check" to see how each student felt about his experiences that day and to identify problems which might have arisen. It is hoped that problem areas could be diffused daily which would prevent a build-up of pressure resulting in an explosion.

The selection of Core Group personnel is extremely critical. The group environment they create provides the foundation for the group's effectiveness. Core Group leaders have to be sensitive, experienced and skilled individuals who are willing and able to establish trust relationships with their groups. Experience in group process is important but not essential.

The Rand Corporation recently did a study to ascertain what educational research has demonstrated relative to effective outcomes of education. After the exhaustive study was completed, they concluded that it was impossible to pinpoint those inputs that would assure positive outputs. However, one notion that they had was that people (teachers and others) seem to hold the most positive clues. The black community has known this for some time.

As many human resources as possible must be brought to bear on the problem. These resources must be sought within and without the school setting. Positive role models must be continuously sought wherever you find them. The core group becomes the heart of this new process. The counselors and school psychologists can keep their present job descriptions -- the community's focus must be on personnel selection throughout.